



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Murphy Statement on UW–Oshkosh Charges

MADISON, WI — Today, the Wisconsin Department of Justice filed criminal charges against UW–Oshkosh’s former Chancellor Richard Wells and former Vice Chancellor Thomas Sonnleitner. Wells and Sonnleitner are being charged in relation to improper financial transactions that occurred under their watch pertaining to five real estate projects.

State Representative Dave Murphy (R–Greenville), chair of the Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities, issued the following statement:

“Thorough and accurate criminal investigations take time. The process is working and people will be held accountable for any harm they’ve done to the university, students, and the state.

“I’m confident UW–Oshkosh is in good hands. In fact, without Chancellor Leavitt bringing these issues to light, and UW System requesting a criminal investigation, accountability would not have been possible.

“UW System Administration and the Board of Regents have already taken actions to prevent these irresponsible and illegal actions from being repeated in the future.

“I expect these charges will be a timely reminder to all UW campus leaders that organizations affiliated with their institutions need to remain transparently separate and independent, an issue recently raised by the non-partisan Legislative Audit Bureau.

“University leaders across the state should take this as a signal that there are real and serious repercussions for skirting the law. Every UW campus administrator would be wise to immediately and fully adhere to the recommendations of the Legislative Audit Bureau, if they haven’t already done so.”

The Legislative Audit Bureau report may be read online by visiting:
<https://legis.wisconsin.gov/lab/media/2725/18-4full.pdf>

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